

Dear Senators of the Iowa Senate,

We write to you today about the nomination of Robert Cramer to the Iowa Board of Regents (the Board). As you know, the Board is a supremely important council that provides guidance, oversight, and resources to Iowa's three public universities and two special schools. The impact that an individual regent can have on the operations of these schools, and therefore on the success of our students across the state, cannot be understated.

There is no doubt that our public universities have made great strides in the last two years reaching out to Iowans and highlighting the unique impact each university has on the state. We, the undersigned, feel that we could have not made these accomplishments without the help and support of the Board of Regents. However, we feel that our open and working relationship with the Board may be in jeopardy. We see the Board as an open and inviting group, where all students are welcome. While, undeniably, political parties play a role in Board appointments, we feel Mr. Cramer's issue specific advocacy against our students crosses a line as a potential Board of Regent member.

Mr. Cramer has dedicated his time and substantial personal resources to advocating against certain communities. Specifically, Mr. Cramer has adamantly opposed the advancement of rights for the lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) community. His prior positions call into question his ability to be fair minded when matters related to academic freedom, free expression, and protections for diverse communities on campus come before the Board.

Our public universities offer a home for all individuals, regardless of their sexual orientation, political ideology, socioeconomic status, race, gender, and the list goes on. It is crucial that we maintain this open community to ensure that students can make contributions to the discourse on campus. The Board has the authority and responsibility to defend and strengthen this community. We believe Mr. Cramer's dedication to political activities that harm the LGBT community should bar him from serving on the Board.

As student leaders, it is our priority to ensure all students feel welcome when bringing issues, ideas, and concerns to the Board's attention. Additionally, it is our priority to ensure that the Board will not be unduly political when helping influence and create policies and laws affecting our students. Just as every student feels welcome on campus, every student should feel welcomed by the Board. Mr. Cramer will likely take away from this dynamic, which would be a detrimental loss.

We urge the Iowa Senate to deny the proposed appointment of Robert Cramer to the Board of Regents. Please attempt to keep the Board free from issue specific political advocacy. The Board is about improving Iowa's public universities, and the individual members should manifest such a mission.

Thank you for your consideration,

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